

**EDUCATION DEPARTMENT[281]**

**Adopted and Filed**

**Rule making related to community college accreditation**

The State Board of Education hereby amends Chapter 24, “Community College Accreditation,” Iowa Administrative Code.

*Legal Authority for Rule Making*

This rule making is adopted under the authority provided in Iowa Code section 260C.49.

*State or Federal Law Implemented*

This rule making implements, in whole or in part, 2022 Iowa Acts, Senate File 2128.

*Purpose and Summary*

This rule making updates standards for community college accreditation, as required by 2022 Iowa Acts, Senate File 2128. These amendments modernize standards for faculty qualifications and faculty quality and development.

*Public Comment and Changes to Rule Making*

Notice of Intended Action for this rule making was published in the Iowa Administrative Bulletin on December 14, 2022, as **ARC 6756C**. No public comments were received. No changes from the Notice have been made.

*Adoption of Rule Making*

This rule making was adopted by the State Board on February 9, 2023.

*Fiscal Impact*

This rule making has no fiscal impact to the State of Iowa.

*Jobs Impact*

After analysis and review of this rule making, no impact on jobs has been found.

*Waivers*

Any person who believes that the application of the discretionary provisions of this rule making would result in hardship or injustice to that person may petition the State Board for a waiver of the discretionary provisions, if any, pursuant to 281—Chapter 4.

*Review by Administrative Rules Review Committee*

The Administrative Rules Review Committee, a bipartisan legislative committee which oversees rule making by executive branch agencies, may, on its own motion or on written request by any individual or group, review this rule making at its [regular monthly meeting](#) or at a special meeting. The Committee’s meetings are open to the public, and interested persons may be heard as provided in Iowa Code section 17A.8(6).

*Effective Date*

This rule making will become effective on April 12, 2023.

The following rule-making actions are adopted:

ITEM 1. Amend subparagraph **24.5(1)“a”(3)** as follows:

(3) Instructors in the area of arts and sciences shall meet one of the following qualifications:

1. Possess a master’s degree or higher from a ~~regionally~~ an accredited graduate school in each field of instruction in which the instructor is teaching classes.

2. Possess a master’s degree or higher from a ~~regionally~~ an accredited graduate school and have completed a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in a combination of the qualifying graduate fields identified as related to the field of instruction in which the instructor is teaching classes. These 18 graduate semester hours must include at least 6 credits in the specific course content being taught, with at least 12 credits required for courses that serve as prerequisites for junior-level courses at transfer institutions.

~~For the transition period ending September 1, 2017, an instructor deemed qualified to teach with a master’s degree and 12 graduate semester hours within a field of instruction and who demonstrates adequate progress toward meeting the goals of the instructor’s individual quality faculty plan shall remain qualified to teach until the date specified in the quality faculty plan or September 1, 2017, whichever comes first.~~

3. For courses identified as applied liberal arts and sciences, possess at least a bachelor’s degree and a combination of formal training and professional tested experience equivalent to 6,000 hours. The instructor shall hold the appropriate registration, certification, or licensure in occupational areas in which such credential is necessary for practice.

For purposes of this subparagraph, “accredited” means that an institution of higher education meets the standards established by an accrediting agency recognized under 34 CFR Part 602 and by Title IV of the federal Higher Education Opportunity Act, Pub. L. No. 110-315.

ITEM 2. Amend subrule 24.5(7), introductory paragraph, as follows:

**24.5(7) *Quality faculty plan.*** The community college shall establish a quality faculty committee consisting of instructors and administrators to develop and maintain a plan for hiring and developing quality faculty. The committee shall have equal representatives of arts and sciences and career and technical faculty with no more than a simple majority of members of the same gender. Faculty shall be appointed by the certified employee organization representing faculty, if any, and administrators shall be appointed by the college’s administration. If no faculty-certified employee organization representing faculty exists, the faculty shall be appointed by administration pursuant to Iowa Code section 260C.48(4). The committee shall submit the plan to the board of directors for consideration, approval and submittal to the department of education. Standards relating to quality assurance of faculty and ongoing quality professional development shall be the accreditation standards of similar accredited institutions of higher education that are consistent with the standards established pursuant to this rule and the faculty standards required under specific programs offered by the community college that are accredited by other accrediting agencies. For purposes of this subrule, “accredited” means that an institution of higher education meets the standards established by an accrediting agency recognized under 34 CFR Part 602 and by Title IV of the federal Higher Education Opportunity Act, Pub. L. No. 110-315.

ITEM 3. Amend subparagraph **24.5(7)“b”(9)** as follows:

(9) Compliance with the faculty accreditation standards of ~~the Higher Learning Commission~~ similar accredited institutions of higher education that are consistent with the standards established pursuant to Iowa Code section 260C.48 and with faculty standards required under specific programs offered by the community college that are accredited by other accrediting agencies. ~~It is recommended that the plan provide for the uniform reports with substantiating data currently required for Higher Learning Commission accreditation.~~ For purposes of this subparagraph, “accredited” means that an institution of higher education meets the standards established by an accrediting agency recognized

under 34 CFR Part 602 and by Title IV of the federal Higher Education Opportunity Act, Pub. L. No. 110-315.

[Filed 2/9/23, effective 4/12/23]

[Published 3/8/23]

EDITOR'S NOTE: For replacement pages for IAC, see IAC Supplement 3/8/23.